

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 015906

R 160805Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3722

INFO AMEMBASSY GOABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 1412

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, LT

1. PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN ANNOUNCED ON MORING DECEMBER 14 IN INTERIM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (INA) THAT HE HAD RECEIVED FROM "SECURITY FORCES" COPY OF LETTER TO HIM (ORIGINAL NOT YET RECEIVED) FROM FOUR POLITICAL LEADERS. LETTER REQUESTED MEETING WITH HIM TO DISCUSS FORMATION OF "GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY", WHICH WOULD GOVERN COUNTRY FOR NOT MORE THAT FIVE YEARS, WITH ELECTIONS TO FOLLOW. HE DECLINED TO NAME SIGNATORIES.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY MFP LEADER EDWIN LEANYA, WHETHER SUGGESTION NOT "SUBVERSIVE OF POWERS OF STATE", PM REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY. HE BELIEVED SUCH MATTERS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN INA RATHER THAN IN PRIVATE MEETINGS.

3. IN AFTERNOON SESSION, AT WHICH JONATHAN NOT PRESENT, GERARD RAMOROBOLI, LEADER OF BCP GROUP IN INA, PROPOSED MOTING CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE ARREST OF FOUR SIGNATORIES. MOTION PASSED WITHOUT OPPOSITION.

4. SABC, USING ABOVE INFO PLUS APPARENTLY A LIBERAL DOSE OF
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IMAGINATION, ANNOUNCED ON EVENING NEWS DECEMBER 14 THAT

JONATHAN HAD STATED HE WOULD ARREST AND TRY THE FOUR ON CHARGES OF HIGH TREASON. GOL INFORMATION DIRECTOR MOTSOENE TOLD CHARGE THERE NO BASIS THAT BROADCAST.

5. AT SOCIAL GATHERING FRIDAY EVENING, CHIEF JUSTICE CONFIRMED TO CHARGE THAT THERE NO BASIS IN LESOTHO LAW FOR TREASON CHARGES ON FACTS AS ANNOUNCED HE ALSO BELIEVES INA MOTION HAS NO FORCE OF LAW AND THUS DOES NOT PROVIDE BASIS FOR ARREST.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE DON'T SEE WHAT BCP LEADER NTSU MOKHEHLE WOULD HAVE TO GAIN BY WRITING LETTER, ONE MUST ASSUME HE WAS ONE OF SIGNATORIES. OTHERWISE, IT UNLIKELY GOVERNMENT AND RAMOREBOLI FACTION WOULD HAVE REACTED SO STRONGLY. IF THIS IS CASE, INCIDENT MAY BE SEEN AS FOLLOW-UP TO RECONCILIATION MOTION (MASERU A-79) WHICH INTRODUCED BY OPPOSITION BUT WELCOMED BY GOVERNMENT, AND WHICH GAVE ENTIRE INA CHANCE TO VILLITY MOKHEHLE. BOTH JONATHAN AND RAMOREBOLI BENEFIT FROM IMPRESSION THUS CREATED THAT MOKHEHLE BECOMING INCREASINGLY ISOLATED AND UNREPRESENTATIVE ANY IMPORTANT SEGMENT OF OPINION. WE DOUBT THAT GOL WILL MOVE TO IMPLEMENT INA MOTION. HOWEVER, AS WITH RECONCILIATION MOTION, IT'S NOW ON RECORD FOR WHATEVER FUTURE USE JONATHAN MAY WISH TO MAKE OF IT.
FRISBIE

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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PINT, PGOV, LT, (JONATHAN, LEABUA), (RAMOREBOLI, GERARD), (MOKHEHLE, NTSU), (LEANY, EDWIN)
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